



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION IX
EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROGRAM**

POLLUTION REPORT

Date: December 19, 2003

From: Michelle Rogow, On-Scene Coordinator

To: Distribution List

Subject: Thunder Mountain Train Wreck Site, Emergency Response Action
Lincoln, Placer County, California
Latitude N 38.8383', Longitude W 121.3072'

POLREP No.: 1 and Final

Reporting Period: Dec. 16-19, 2003

Start Date: Dec. 16, 2003

Task Order No.: NA

CERCLIS ID #: NA

Response Authority: CERCLA/OPA

Site ID No.: NA

Completion Date: TBD

NPL Status: Non-NPL

I. SITUATION:

- A. The site is located adjacent to the Thunder Mountain Casino near the intersection of Industrial and Athens Avenues near Lincoln, California. The site is the location of a derailment of a Union Pacific Train traveling from Portland, Oregon to Roseville, CA. At approximately 8:00 am, 27 cars or the 45 car train derailed from the track, mostly depositing on the east side of the track. While the derailed cars primarily contained wood, plastics and paper, one car contained a residue of styrene resin. The general service car with the resin residue sustained damage to the exterior and interior portions of the tank.
- B. Buried on the east of the tracks, in the direction that the cars had accumulated, was a 6" Kinder Morgan pipeline and a Qwest fiber-optic line. Due to the locations of the derailed cars, the pipeline, which was carrying diesel to the Chico Terminal, was pressured down. No anomalies in the pipelines pressure were noticed prior to shut down of the line.

II. ACTIONS TAKEN:

- A. UPRR responded to the incident and immediately mobilized its cleanup and re-railment contractors to the scene. An Incident Command was set up, with IC function fulfilled by Placer County Fire Chief. Industrial Avenue, in the area surrounding the derailment was closed to the public.
- B. After initial entry and inspection, the damaged resin car was determined not to be leaking. UPRR contract resources began arriving. First, all the cars which had not derailed were

moved down the rail in the north and south directions away from the site.

- C. Secondly, derailed cars on the south side began to be moved. Since most of the cars were on the east side, potentially on top of the pipeline, work focused on rolling the cars across the tracks onto the west side, where they were moved to the side for salvage, recovery and cleanup. Because each of the cars were fully loaded, progress was slow.
- D. En route, EPA coordinated with CAOES continued coordination on incident events and resource issues. At approximately 1 pm, OSC Rogow arrived on scene, and observed the train derailment. The OSC met with UPRR and Kinder Morgan representatives and the IC.
- E. The agencies met and discussed response strategy with UPRR and Kinder Morgan. Priority issues discussed were oil spill prevention, retention, and collection. Concern continued to be expressed regarding the Kinder Morgan pipeline at the base of the train pile up. After consultation and at the request of Command, UPRR installed a soil berm across the drainage ditch to the eastside of the tracks. The purpose of the berm was to prevent migration of any material which may have been released from the pipeline.
- F. By nightfall, a second re-railing crew was on site and began to work on cleanup of railcars on the north side of the incident. Work on both the north and south sides of the track continued through the night.
- G. Kinder Morgan continued to express concern over potential damage to the pipeline which might be sustained during the process of rolling the cars off the east side, so on Wednesday, two cranes were brought in to lift remaining cars off of the area of the pipeline.
- H. By 8pm on Wednesday, the rail cars had been removed from a substantial area and work on exposing the pipeline could begin. Kinder Morgan mobilized resources to excavate the pipeline and by Thursday, at noon, they completed excavation. The pipe was visually inspected and found to be in good condition, possibly due to the discovery that the pipeline was deeper than originally anticipated. Around 3 pm, Kinder Morgan repressurized the line and it held. Transfer of products in the pipeline resumed and the daylighted line was backfilled.
- I. On Wednesday, Qwest put in an aboveground patch for their fiber-optic cable which lay adjacent to the railroad. The existing line has been exposed and will be inspected prior to returning the buried fiberoptic line to service.
- J. Work on removal of the rail cars from the eastside and repair of the tracks continued. On Thursday morning, the general service car which contained the resin solution was inerted, placed on flat bed rail and relocated Roseville yard.

- K. By noon on Thursday, rail maintenance began to repack the ballast on the rail and prepare the rail line for return to service. Thursday afternoon some cleanup cars began traversing over the tracks.
- L. Around 7 am on Friday, December 19th, the tracks were back in full operation, as the first fully loaded train passed over the rails.
- M. The road is in the process of being repaired and work on the removal of rail cars and shipped materials will continue for the next few weeks.
- N. Most of the solid waste that was generated was disposed of at the Placer County Municipal Landfill. What was able to be salvaged will be transported off site.

III. PLANS:

- A. Further assessment of potential damage to Qwest fiberoptic line.
- B. Removal of remaining solid wastes and salvage materials from site.
- C. Investigation of cause of the incident is being conducted by UPRR.

IV. KEY ISSUES:

- A. Public and media attention.
- B. Duration of impact on rail and pipeline closures and surrounding businesses.

VI. ESTIMATED COSTS:

- A. Case closed.

V. DISPOSITION OF WASTES:

- A. Solid wastes are being taken to Placer County Landfill.

VI. CONTACT INFORMATION:

- A. Michelle Rogow (415-972-3082)

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